

DEATH
VALLEY
DRIVER

The Matisse-ainesque Cover was created by the lovely and talented Andrea Schneider- a West Coast Artist whose offspring tends to write at length about wrestling.

SHADOW WX! and a PARKED CAR! end up having a lot in common! AJA KONG! and KAORU! have on one of them there Match Of The Years! ARISON! OSAKA PRO! COMBAT ZONE! DAMN! There sure is a lot of GARBAGE! wrestling in this ISSUE!

WELCOME TO THE DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #118!

Hey! We're back from our foray into the Lucha Libre tapes we'll never catch up on and now it's time to catch up on the other stuff that has gone unreveiwed and unremarked upon, as they are stacking up in our houses and becoming impromptu tables for our ladies to snort giant lines of coke off of. Pete reviews anything with a TWINSTAR~!! and a hot daughter of Gran Hamada. Rippa reviews anything with either a burning US economy sized vehicle or a fat Dick Togo. Schneider reviews any tape with 7 bladejobs and two MOTYCs on it. I review half of all the new TORYUMON that the truly beloved GLENN has sent to us out of the gigantic goodness of his heart and counter it with a Big Japan sleaze beyond sleaze tape and an EFW tape that is sleaze beyond sleaze beyond sleaze. First, line up and embrace the adorable one, the internet phenomenon called - PEEEEETE.....

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CARNIVAL ARSION '99 (12/11/99, Yokohama Bunka Gym)

(by PETE STEIN)

I know, I know... I promised back in DVDVR 116 that I'd bring the rest of that 1981 WWF for this issue. Problem is I misplaced the tape... and besides, why play Wally Pipp when you've got Lou Gehrig sitting right there on the bench?

ARSION Premium Single Virgin '99:

YUMI FUKAWA vs. CANDY OKUTSU:

Title comes from the fact that this is a rematch from their previous (mind-blowingly good) singles match on the ARSION debut show. What's shown here (all 90 seconds of an 11-minute match) looks OK as they work a fast-paced match until Yumi reverses a Tiger Suplex attempt by Candy into an anklelock and Candy taps for the upset.

Lucha Libre Rules: RIE TAMADA/LINDA STAR vs. AI FUJITA/MARI APACHE:

Clip-a-riffic first half leads to more extended footage as the match progresses, featuring Mari hitting a crazy RVD-style flip dive off the turnbuckles onto Linda and Tamada. Later Mari and Tamada work a hot sequence with Mari reversing Tamada's frankenstein attempt into a hot Liger bomb for a near-fall. Mari's gotten sooooo much better since I first saw her work the ZION tourney back in '98. Tamada comes back by going kneecap-dropkick crazy on Fujita and Mari and follows with a sweet Dragon Screw on Mari, but Linda accidentally hits her with a missile dropkick and Mari hits an ultra-fast La Magistral to eliminate Tamada at about 10:30. Linda bum-rushes Mari with a rollup for a near-fall and quickly evens the match with a high-speed Frankenstein off the top at 11:04. Fujita takes over on Linda with a corbata, downs her and hits

a beautiful 450 splash for the win at 12:00. Would've liked to see them go longer between the eliminations, but what aired was pretty spiffy.

Sky-High Of ARSION Title: CHAPPARITA ASARI vs. HIROMI YAGI:

They work a sweet spot early where ASARI goes for her double-backspring dropkick, but Yagi catches her foot in the corner and slaps on an anklelock. This is fun as hell because first Yagi goes crazy on ASARI with armlocks and submissions, then all of a sudden Yagi switches to high-flying while ASARI starts to work Yagi's arm with a jujigatame and then the Kunze Armbar. Yagi eventually hits an Asai moonsault and goes for something else; ASARI meets her up top and hits a top-rope Frankenstein, but Yagi rolls through and immediately slaps on an anklelock that ASARI has to rope-break out of after some time. Yagi hits the ropes, but ASARI kicks her on the rebound and spikes her with an MDII. Something else gets clipped here, leading to ASARI heading up top for the Sky-Twister Press... and TOTALLY misses Yagi. "Airrrrball... airrrrball..." Luckily Yagi was already dead from the first MDII, so ASARI gives her one more for good measure and gets the pin at 15:07 to retain the Sky-High strap. Match looked really good for the most part, but it might be time for ASARI to say "screw it" and give up the Sky-Twister for good.

ARSION & Toryumon Dream Mix: MIKIKO "BEAUTY" FUTAGAMI/ SUMO DANDY FUJI (License #072!) vs. MAG-CHAMA TOKYO (Omukai)/ MAGNUM TOKYO (License #GO):

Sumo and Gami immediately become the cutest couple in Puroresu as they strut around Bunka Gym pre-show and Gami unintentionally wipes out on part of the ring equipment, then Sumo cuts this hysterical promo on the TOKYOs. Let's just say you don't have to understand a single word of Japanese to see where Sumo's coming from. Match proper doesn't really start for almost 5 minutes as they make with the jokes to start, including Sumo cracking up Omukai with his pre-match sumo ritual. Later on they work the greatest Frankenstein spot ever as Omukai tries to give Sumo a rana off the top, but he holds her in place and gives us the Yuki Ishikawa "MOTY, DADDY!" leer before picking her up and literally making her squeal out loud to bust up the whole building. Sumo motions for one more minute from the crowd, but TOKYO puts an end to Sumo Jeffrey Crawford's bachelor party with a boot to the head. TOKYO tries to give Gami the Hippy Hippy Rana but she pokes him right in the Little Tokyo, then Sumo holds him in a camel clutch while she hits the ropes a couple of times and gives TOKYO a People's Smooch that he sells like former ECW Arena mutant Stanley just frenched him. From that point on it's basically a normal tag match, ending when TOKYO *nukes* Gami with the Viagra Driver and follows with a tope on Sumo while Omukai plants her with a BT Bomb for the pin at 15:09. Hilarious match as long as you don't go in with high expectations of quality wrestling. Any match that makes Ishikawa look like a eunuch is A-OK in my book.

Queen Of ARSION Title match: AJA KONG vs. MARIKO YOSHIDA:

JIP five minutes in? Hoo boy... Aja dominates the early part of what's shown until she hits a powerbomb on Yoshida, who quickly snares Aja's arm and slaps on a nifty-looking Crippler Crossface variation where she wraps up Aja's arm with her legs. Aja has to fight for the ropes, at which point Yoshida hits the Air-Raid Crash for 2. She tries for it again, but Aja drops behind her and slaps on a choke sleeper that Yoshida is stuck in for almost two minutes before she can

finally get to the ropes. Aja goes for the uraken, but Yoshida ducks and tries for a waki; Aja rolls through but gets planted with a kick to the face from Yoshida for 2. Aja tries for the uraken again, but Yoshida again avoids it and traps Aja in this freaky cross-armbreaker, then turns it into a straight jujigatame. Yoshida keeps going for the Air-Raid again until Aja finally grazes her with an uraken for 2, then toasts her with a second for the pin at 12:16. This match was kind of a disappointment to me, as it was almost like an extended squash for Aja. Yoshida got some offense in, but not really enough that the crowd thought she had much of a chance of winning.

Twinstar Of ARSION Title Match: AYAKO HAMADA/AKINO vs. ETSUKO MITA/ MIMA SHIMODA:

"Bring a raincoat- you will get wet on this ride." Brief feeling-out process at the start comes to an abrupt end as CAZAI double up on Mita and send her to the floor. AKINO punks out Shimoda on the apron as well, and Ayako holds both of LCO so AKINO can hit this majestic, hands-free tope con hilo onto them. Ayako passes LCO off to her partner and goes for an Asai moonsault, but LCO move out of the way and Ayako hits AKINO by accident. Mita smokes Ayako with a chairshot and Shimoda deals with AKINO on the floor. Splitscreen! Splitscreen! Splitscreen! Back in-ring Mita tries for a cheap pin only for AKINO to catch her arm and slap on an armlock/headscissors combo until Shimoda can break it up. LCO set about dismantling AKINO for awhile until she hits a sweet front rolling cradle on Shimoda and makes the tag to Ayako. CAZAI actually control things for a minute or two until Mita puts her feet up for an AKINO splash and literally catapults her into the air with her feet. Hey, now AKINO doesn't need to have those ribs removed for the beauty contests. Both of CAZAI roll to the floor, where Shimoda hits her assisted flip dive and Mita follows with a tope. Splitscreen! Splitscreen! The destruction of CAZAI starts in earnest now as Ayako taps a vein in such a way that would make Gran proud, while AKINO gets bounced off the walls. Mita holds AKINO and makes her watch Shimoda destroy her partner with a piledriver through a table, then gives AKINO a chairshot for good measure (AKINO with the Hoganesque on-camera blade job). Aja starts to protest, which leads to the ALL-TIME blood spot as Shimoda wipes her hand on Ayako's bloody head and leaves a handprint of her blood on Aja's sweatshirt! Right up there with Muta painting "DEATH" on Hakushi's staff! CAZAI briefly come back with their double tope, but Mita cuts Ayako off with a chairshot to her back and LCO obliterate CAZAI for several minutes. CAZAI get another brief spurt after Mita accidentally gets clocked by Shimoda, and Ayako uses LCO's own chairs on them. By this point it's turning into all those 80s Crush Gals/Dump's Army matches where the young faces get obliterated but come back using the heels' own tactics. Mita hits the Blazing Chop on Ayako, who no-sells it and hits an enzuigiri. AKINO comes in, gets backdropped by Mita and lands on her feet, but Shimoda hits her with a missile dropkick in a cool spot. Mita sets AKINO up for the DVB, but AKINO flips out of it, hits a rana and immediately turns it into a jujigatame. AKINO heads up top; Shimoda stops her and Mita heads in to do a top-rope DVB, but AKINO hits a sunset flip instead. It's great as LCO keep throwing everything in the book at CAZAI who keep coming back, and now the match goes back and forth for the rest of the way. Ayako uses dad's headbutts on Shimoda and slaps on the Ayakita, and Mita has to throw her chair halfway across the ring at Ayako's head to break it. Ayako tries to hit a quebrada on Shimoda, but she moves out of the way, sets Ayako up top and hits the Aussie Suplex, then heads back up top and hits a rolling guillotine for 2.999. Mita picks up Ayako, allows Shimoda to

give her the axe kick and finally hits the DVB, but AKINO saves. Shimoda heads up top but Ayako stuns her with a HUGE shotay, hits a Hamada Cutter off the top and gets the gigantic upset pin at 22:38! Crowd goes apeshit as Mita threatens to kill the ref... like that 5-second pause between "2" and "3" wasn't enough for her to kick out of? Shimoda throws a hissy fit that lasts until Aja moseys over and tells her to get the fuck out of her ring. Just a super match, with some interesting contrasts to the Satomura/Kato vs. Oz/Aja match as well... similar yet different.

Twinstar Of ARSION tag tournament finals apparently follow this... but c'mon- what could possibly follow that last match?

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Osaka Pro - Osaka Wars Vol. 1 - Spicy Series (May 1999)
(PHIL RIPPA)

These matches took place before the other Osaka Pro show that I reviewed which means it is pre-SATAN WORSHIP!

(May 5, 1999)

Yuji Sugamoto vs. Masaru Seno:

This is the battle of youngsters who were trained by either Super Delfin or Dick Togo. Seno, our SATAN WORSHIPING hero, now goes by the name Daio QUALLT but that is neither here nor there. Nice little rookie match as both guys have a great grasp of the mat based portion of their offense. Sugamoto is already king-sized in the bizarre counter into submissions department. Seno has accepted the fact that he really wasn't meant to leave the mat so he has the above average heavyweight offense going. He is also entitled to one absurd move and that is what can only be described as push-up headbutts. Meanwhile, Sugamoto does every wrestling move he has ever seen in the hopes that something will stick. That means a bunch of blown spots as he tries something for the first time in front of the 200 people who showed up. Bless Sugamoto's little heart though as he isn't afraid to drop kick you right in the face. He also does this neat DDT out of a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. Man, if Sugamoto keeps this up, he is my early candidate to shoot up the DVD 500.

Super Demokin/Kuishinbo Kamen vs. Virus Policeman/Zumbido:

I have yet to determine which is creepier - Super Demokin's mask which has the set of eyeballs right on top which constantly gives you the feeling of being watched or his ode to Barbara Eden ring attire. Kamen is truly one of the best wrestling clowns around. He's still plays to his comedy roots (passing out candy to the kids, doing the goofy jumping routine) but he made sure that he knew how to wrestle too. I don't know what favor Delfin was cashing in to get Zumbido to make an appearance but I ain't complaining as he rules it in this match. Kamen and Zumbido rip it up a whole bunch which was kinda neat as they constantly upped the armdrag sequences to tricked out proportions. Policeman gets all younger brother trying to impress older brother as he firmly plants his knee on turnbuckle and launches himself to his doom all the while shouting "Zumbido! Look at ME!" Demokin doesn't overly impress me but he didn't stink it up or anything. He does some stuff and wiggles his noses a bit. Kamen gets the win with the World's Most Out

Of Control Sky Twister Press which was so right in its surrealness (how often do you see a wrestling clown spinning wildly out of control) and so wrong in its ability to maim and cripple (Policeman is lucky his knee wasn't shattered).

Ultra Ace vs. Zacharius:

Ultra Ace might be Super Ace or Super Cacao. I have seen two different names on various matchlists and considering his tights have the word Cacao written across the front. No matter - he has a bizarre red and silver outfit right down to phallic symbol on his mask. Zacharius is supposedly some creature from somewhere that ripped lots of holes in his clothes. He torments children and stinks up the ring. Not a good match at all. Lots of silly handshaking spots. Man, if Ace is getting out thought by what quite possibly could be the Great Pumpkin, then I think he needs to put away the Mensa application and see if the Sweet Pickles van makes trips to Osaka.

May 4, 1999

Super Delfin /Masaru Seno/ Masato Yakushiji vs. Violencia/ Black Buffalo/ Dick Togo:

Whenever Delfin and Togo decide to have a six man, the other four participants could be me, Dean, Schneider and a corpse and it would still be watchable. (Well, actually that six man would be watchable because Phil and I are willing to bump and it would be fun to see how long Dean would last before getting blown up.) So imagine how much fun this match was. Violencia has forgotten more armdrag and headscissor takeovers than Yakushiji has ever done so Yakushiji is all sorts of happy that there is someone else besides Togo to make him look good. Hot opening gets the crowd all fired up and sets the tone for the match. Brawling mixed with some high spots. Now when your roster is somewhat on the lean side, some of the younger folk are going to have to step up. In this case, Seno is more than happy to answer the challenge. He takes a nasty spill into the chairs. Most guys will just feed their back into the chairs and just push them out of the way. Seno trips and ends up tumbling end over end through the chairs. Whoops! Seno is beat on for awhile, including doing the fat blade job, which really rallies the crowd behind him. Hot finishing sequence as everyone hits their finishers but no one can get the three. Togo mistakenly wastes Buffalo with a chair and Seno hits the big clothesline for the upset win. Neat little way to elevate Seno.

May 5, 1999

Dick Togo vs. Naohiro Hoshikawa:

Hoshikawa is one of my favorite wrestlers who I haven't seen enough of recently. He has come into his own and the feud with Togo ain't going to hurt at all. There is an extended video package at the beginning to get everyone up to speed. Early on, Togo turns all sorts of Jeff Hardy on me as he compresses his own neck missing a charge on the outside. I guess Togo had his eyes open during his WWF stint as he hits a People's Elbow, a Pedigree and a Bubba Cutter. Big psychological point of the match is Hoshikawa missing a kick on the outside, catching nothing but ring post. Togo immediately starts to work over the leg and since 75% of Hoshikawa's offense is based in his legs, Togo has a clear advantage. Hoshikawa garners almost no offense the rest of the match. Of course, it doesn't help that Togo obliterates him with

a senton through a table. Togo hits another senton to get the win and then talks some shit which I believe roughly translated to "Come back when you are ready to hang with the big boys."

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TORYUMON 2/2000 on GAORA TV
(DEAN RASMUSSEN)

Kennichiro Arai vs. Ryo Saito:

Arai is becoming maligned by fans because he is very headbuttcentric and, unfortunately, there is a large precedent for this hatred. The other headbutt-based wrestlers in Puroresu are the horrendous Tanny Mouse and the horrendous Tamon Honda so it is a natural reflex for the wrestling fan to figure on being as burned by Arai as they were burned that time they got trapped watching a tape with Tamon Honda wrestling Kimala 2 for twenty minutes. Luckily for we wrestling fans, young Arai breaks the mold and is an actual real good wrestler- as is the wont of anyone that Ultimo trained. Arai works stiff as hell, will take a king-sized ass-kicking, doesn't fear dangerous moves and he seems to put together logical matches- so I'm all for him despite the cranium-based stigma he has saddled himself with. (The Other Dyed-Blonde) Saito is the next in a line of youthful gimmicks as he joins Genki Horiguchi's Surferboy gimmick with his recreational cyclist gimmick- though the fact that he doesn't come out to "Bicycle" by Queen means that he doesn't match "Surfing USA" by the pre-cool Beach Boys used by Genki in the race to see who can have the goofiest theme song in ALLLLLLLLL of TORYUMON. Any way, this match is basically Arai working on Saito's back with lotsa Knife-edge Chops thrown in early and often. And y'know, Saito is a good little worker- he's all smooth and hits a nice Spinning Kick To The Face and wasn't afraid to whip out the BOSS Locomotion Captures Suplexes into the Superfisherman Buster. He also has the most preposterous submission hold in all grappling- with his Tangly Tangly Surfboard Indian Deathlock Inversion that one would usually have to graft Carl Malenko's dna to Dos Caras' semen to produce an offspring that could conjure such a ridiculously complex hold. The match itself is kinda like a big nearfall fest, but with submission attempts replacing pinfalls- a sort of modified BattlARTS idea. Saito is the flashier of the two- flying into a Triangle Hold like Minoru Tanaka and Hidaka's lost third Godhead of Luchamission wackiness. the pinfall attempts that come out of this section are superheated by the stark contrast. Saito is finally put away by Arai doing a Locomotion Headbutt TRAIN! into a Diving Headbutt. WOO-HOO! This was good enough for Rock and Roll.

Masaaki Mochizuki vs. Chocoball Kobe:

THIS was motherfucking BOSS. You can punch Chocoball right in the motherfucking face really hard and he won't bust out crying like a big baby. I know it. I saw it. Mochizuki mauls him like Choco called Koji Kitoa a big fat motherfucker or something. Jiminy fucking Christmas, these two just beat the living shit out of each other and we get to watch. Chocoball is rookie of the year and this match was WAAAY too short. This was fucking great. This could be match of the century in two years. This was a mutual bear-mauling. You want every fucking second of this.

Magnum Tokyo / Dragon Kid / Masaaki Mochizuki vs. Cima / Sumo Fuji / Makoto:

CIMA is a dick in this. this is violent as hell. The always-injured SUWA assists in beating the fuck out of Magnum and Mokoto isn't afraid to break all of Magnum's ribs. SORRY RICKY MARVIN! DRAGON KID SMOKES YOU LIKE A CHEAP CIGAR! DK does the fucking greatest armdrag I've ever seen and follows up with the cool ass Reverse Ringrope Moonsault to floor. The match kinda falls into the usual level of Toryumon Six-man quality- with DK being the hapless victim of the CIMA Indian Deathlock Surfboard while Dandy Fuji makes with Sumo palmthrusts- and assorted elaborate beatings follow. after the good guys get back on offense, it goes MAD with highflying as DK hits the FATTEST TOPE IN ALL JAPAN as Magnum beats the holy fuck out of MOKOTO with a Brainbuster and Viagra Driver to DIE for. After the big save, DK hits the coolest ace Crusher ever on CIMA- as he stops short of a Lucha Giant Snapmare to crush CIMA's antlike jaw. The match flies totally out of control as Magnum and CIMA blow a corner hurricanrana and the zillion nearfalls kick in. The save sequence is so fucking out of control that Sumo DANDY Fuji hits a Pescado. The finish is AWESOME as Dragon Kid hits a Stardust Splash and hurts his arm and hits his two most fucked-up highspots - The Forward roll into a Rana and the world's Fastest Rana out of a powerbomb both with one arm. Post match- after he pins Makoto, DK is beaten to death by SUWA who rips his mask off and a GAEA-level riot breaks out in the ring. Susumu Mochizuki and Yasushi Kanda turn on and beat CRAZY MAX with bats- and then Genki Horiguchi jumps on Mochizuki and Kanda and then they beat the hell out of him. ULTIMO DRAGON jumps in the ring and beats the hell out of Kanda and Susumu and I guess the un-retirement angle is now in full swing. This match was INSANE. Parts were less than stellar but the whole was pretty spectacular- as these are DEFINATELY as good or better than Michinoku Pro 96/97 as Dragon Kid is the added extra as he transcends his World's Best Yakushiji role that he had nailed down for a while and is more of an actual cog in the wheel of goodness as the best high-flyer but also the smallest most vulnerable member of the technicos taking him into the Rey Misterio Jr realm of Technico usefulness. And Masaaki Mochizuki and Makoto are the added extras that blow it over the top as they bring the STIFF that wasn't at a level close to this in the KDX stuff. Plus the booking is fun and great and the hatred is there and SUWA is a total FUCKING psycho. And UD looks fucking great. The best T-PANIC you'll ever see...

Minoru Fujita vs.. Chocoball Kobe:

Fujita is up for the task of carrying the raw batch of young spunky stiffness called Chocoball Kobe as they have a little match of Nuevo Mongrel Shootstyle, with Fujita being less fun than Hidaka would have been- a label that will follow him for a while, one would suppose. Fujita hits a SWANK Dragon Screw to start the crushing of Kobe's kneejoints that contained the Atomic Drop on the knee and a Figure Four. Kobe doesn't sell it like a champ as he goes into kick mode on Fujita. Fujita is eternally calming the match down and taking it to the mat to slow down the hyperactive Chocoball and Chocoball reacts well by hitting some nice submission combinations. Fujita hits a really nice Springboard Dropkick and goes back to the leg. Kobe hits a nasty looking Uraken but Fujita gets him in the Rings Of Fujita to put him away. This kinda showed Kobe's rookie weakness as he didn't sell the leg for an instant though it was the center of the match. Still, quite okay wrestling. Fujita is a keeper and he can carry the youngsters.

Chocoball Kobe vs. Kawauchi:

I don't know who Kawauchi is, but he's a big fella and he stands in there to be pummeled by Chocoball. It's all basic and resembles quite the rookie match. Perfunctory. Listless. Unembarrassing. Your basic successful rookie match.

Cima / Sumo Fuji / Makoto vs. Magnum Tokyo / Tiger Mask / Masaaki Mochizuki:

HEY! Tiger Mask 4 makes the scene! Masaaki Mochizuki, TM4 and MAKOTO all in the same ring can only mean the stiffness we all deserve. CIMA vs Magnum is as electric as you remember except this time out, CIMA doesn't flip off Magnum after the shoulder blocks- thus this match is diminished slightly. TM assumes technico in peril as he and MAKOTO have an awkward sequence that does produce a sweet armdrag by TM4. Sumo- who is the good rudo that noone ever gives the proper respect to- takes a batch of Mochizuki kicks. SUWA- the super-electric rudo even while injured, beats the crap out of Magnum. At this point it becomes a rote version of the inspired Six-man from earlier on the tape and you then have a big long batch of every technico in peril. Mochizuki is pretty great taking it to the finish as he hits all of his springboard kicks to set-up a very beautiful Brainbuster- as Sumo takes it all like a champ. this was good but you've seen it before. My problem with it was that it was the highflying TM4 that showed instead of the hard-edged TM4 that I've come to love. Also it was quite the kinder, gentler Mochizuki and MAKOTO for the most part. The only one supplying the tension and drama was SUWA and he wasn't even in the match. There you go.

YOU WANT ALL TORYUMON and you want this for the first three matches. And everything past the first three is perfectly fine wrestling though far from spectacular.

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\$\$\$\$\$ GAEA Television 2/25/00 (taped Jan-Feb; 2/13 Tokyo)

(PHIL SCHNEIDER)

This show started slow but really picked up, with three awesome matches at the end. This was probably the best GAEA TV show I have seen with Aja v. KAORU being a legitimate MOTYC.

Sakruta Hirota vs. Saika Takeuchi:

Here are some things I have found funny lately-

I thought that sections of the recent American Psycho film (which was a surprisingly faithful adaptation of the book, something which most film critics completely missed, as they were quick to vilify the novel while praising the film) were hilarious. Especially the solemn comparisons of business cards, the soliloquies on bad 80's pop music and the dishes ordered in restaurants. I was ambivalent about the Christian Bale's performance, but the movie itself is damn funny.

George Saunders is one of my favorite writers and his new book Pastoralia is a great collection of short stories. He does a great job of injecting pathos into absurdity and is a very funny writer. Buying a 180 page hardcover book is really only feasible for freaks like me, but ya'll should check it out when it comes to paperback

All of you should be hip to The Onion, they has had quite the high profile and isn't really the hip underground thing it was a couple of years ago. Still the most consistently hilarious thing on the net, especially the throwaway jokes. I am still laughing about last weeks "47 Punk Bands Change Name To 'The Miami Relatives' " and this weeks "Local Hipster Over-Explaining Why He Was At Mall" was one of the best things they ever did.

I don't find Sakruta Hirota's wacky comic escapades particularly funny though, and she sure as shit can't wrestle, so I don't want to see her matches.

Mayumi Ozaki vs. Toshiya Yamada:

Yamada is sporting her new Mad Max camo, blond hair and face paint look. And it is pretty fresh. This is a garbagey brawl, and was a little disappointing considering who was involved. There was a lot of good stuff, including some nasty uses of a chain, and a batch of blood, plus Ozaki knows how to pace a match well, but all wasn't good. Besides a pretty ass walk around the outside brawl, the big problem I had with this match is that I just don't buy big portions of Mayumi Ozaki's offense. Ozaki is pretty tiny, but she uses a big power offense which just doesn't look very credible against someone as big Yamada (I would argue that it doesn't even look credible against smaller workers, but it looks especially implausible against Toshiya). She cant really get her over for the Tequila Sunrise and it looks more like a roll up then a suplex. Ozaki ends up winning the match with a Uraken which is just preposterous, I have seen Yamada's face get caved in by Yukimiko Hotta's kicks and Aja Kong's punches, and now 110 pound Mayumi Ozaki is going to knock her cold with a Uraken.

Chigusa Nagayo/Toshie Uematsu vs. Akira Hokuto/RIE:

Alex Marvez would definitely call this "The Best Match on Nitro" and rave for a sentence or two about the hot action and the advance of the Chigusa v. Hokuto storyline while elevating "The New Blood" of RIE and Uematsu, and it was funny to see Chigusa try a top rope tope con hilo and land all awkward, but- fuck- this is a tape I had to get from Dean who had to get in from Glenn who had to send it all the way from Japan. I want the match to last longer then four minutes, call me greedy

Lioness Aska/Sonoko Kato vs. Chiyako Nagashima/Sugar Sato:

Sato and Nagashima are the best tag team in Women's Wrestling. They work really well together and paly their roles very well. Sato is the powerhouse (i.e. Doug Furnas with slightly smaller hooters) and Nagashima is the technician (Distaff Danny Kroffat which is actually a decent analogy because Nagashimia is always breaking out these really cool match finishes). This team just breaks out cool match after cool match, and often out performs the higher profile Superstars. This match blends brawling and wrestling much better then any LCO match I have seen in a while, and- while that may have a lot to do with Lioness Aska- Sato and Nagashima deserve a lot of credit too. The match started with controlled in ring brawling, Lioness placed her table across both Sato and Nagashima while Kato did the double stomp. They then took it too the floor, and the action was pretty great which was a nice surprise, as most joshi crowd brawling sucks ass. Nagashima did a double stomp off of the stariway balcony and dropkicked

Lioness down the stairs. They then went back into the ring, where they settled down into a regular ass-stomping wrestling match. The end was great with Sugar attacking Lioness, and Nagashima and Kato, doing this tricked out intricate counter series, where they each countered each others finishers, before Nagahsima hit a fishermans buster for the win. This may have been the best tag match Sato and Nagashima have had, and one of the better GAEA tags in league history, just a totally rock ass match.

KAORU vs. Mayumi Ozaki:

This was a straight garbage match and was really well done with nice pacing and a ton of crazy spots. They start out with a cat fight which was kind of weird to watch when it is done by two talented workers not a pair of implanted ex-porno fluffers who got their jobs by getting sodomized by Danny Doring. Ozaki gets a barbed wire pogo stick from an OZ academy cadet and swings it at KAORU who jumps and jukes it like Jackie Chan or Bruce Lee in a really inventive spot. The OZ academy is helping Ozaki and Kato is assiting KAORU so it is almost like a lumberjack match. Tons of brutal spots including a senton through a table to the floor by KAORU, a destiny hammer by Ozaki with a chain around her knee, and a nasty Emerald Frozien by KAORU. The end was really choice as Ozaki attempts her uraken and KAORU blocks it with a piece of table and Ozaki smashes her forearm against the jagged chunk of table. KAORU responds with a left hook which knocks out Ozaki for the win. Kind of spotty match but really fun, with tons of nasty, innovative spots and bunches of blood. Both ladies are really great brawlers, and tend to shine in these types of matches.

Aja Kong vs. KAORU:

Match of the year so far, and one of the better Joshi matches I have seen in a long time, probably the best match in GAEA history (maybe Aja v. Meiko, I got to watch them both again, Meiko v. Aja was straight wrestling, while this had table spots and stuff so that might help the earlier match.) The opening was about as frantic as you will ever see, KAORU offers her hand and when Aja takes it, she quickly hits Aja with a german suplex which send Aja to the floor. KAORU then breaks out a great tope, which smacks the back of Aja's head into the guard rail, then KAORU goes up and hits Orihara moonsaults from a pair of opposite corners, she then busts out a table and tries to senton Aja through the table but misses. After that frantic opening the match slows a bit. With Aja taking control and just beating the crap out of KAORU on the outside with pieces of the table and parts of the guardrail, with KAORU hitting a nasty blade job. The match moves into the ring with Aja dominating with power moves. They do a great spot where Aja hurles KAORU over her head straight to the floor, Aja then goes for a tope, but KAORU lifts a piece of table and AJA slams right into it. KAORU takes the advantage and attempts a moonsault with a broken chunk of table, Aja moves but KAORU lands on her feet, Aja attempts a Uraken but KAORU blocks it with the board injuring Aja's arm. This sets up the main point of psychology for the match as KAORU works over the arm to keep Aja from using her uraken, with Aja blading her arm for effect and doing her usual stellar job of selling. The end was really choice as KAORU attempts to jab the corner of the table into Aja's arm but misses- hurting her hand, Aja then just punts KAORU in the face (possibly knocking a tooth out)a and hits a uraken for a near fall. Aja then looks down at her arm, and wipes the arm blood on her face adding a scream (which was a really great moment) before just wasting KAORU with

another uraken for the pin. Just an awesome match, crazy spots, great selling, brutal stiff work, super psychology all you could want from this match, pretty close to perfect.

~!~

\$%\$%\$%\$%\$%\$%\$%\$% Big Japan BATTLE STATION on SAMURAI TV! 2/27/00 (taped 2/22 Tokyo)

(Rasmussen)

Kintaro Kanemura vs. Ryuji Yamakawa (WEW Hardcore Title):

Kanemura still has a little in the tank and Yamakawa is becoming quite the Death Match superworker so that all adds up to perfectly fine garbage wrestling. The difference is that Yamakawa fearlessly uses the Actual Wrestling Moves to hit the offensive transitions while Kanemura is based a whole lot more on tables, lowblows, chairs, and blatant homoerotic imagery than his Big Japan counterpart. The good part is that when the big wrestling move is needed to advance the story, Kanemura is more than adept so this is right square in the realm of the Nouvelle Death Match Of The Modern Era- in that the Bumps are VERY big and very key, but the psychology of the match and selling components to the psychology are just as important as the big bumps. They mirror the Honma/Yamakawa classics by working towards one big spot that will drive the finish of the match, with the big spot being a Brainbuster off the stage through two tables. Yamakawa adjusts his Honma-based attack by not hitting wrestling moves to get Kanemura to the big spot but by becoming psychotic with garbage violence and beating Kanemura with chairs until Kanemura is in position. This match is wonderously free of aimless stupid wandering though it lapses into elaborate set-ups to spots that take too long- though Yamakawa is brilliant in taking the flaw into consideration and fighting out of the predicament thusly while still positioning himself to take the big bump or logically getting Kanemura into position for the bump. Kanemura works on Yamakawa's arm early- and by "Works" I mean "Stabs With a Broken Flourescent Lightbulb". It becomes a minor point of psychology when they get into some actual wrestling passages as Kanemura uses the shredded gore that was Yamakawa's elbow to reverse a toprope Facebuster that Yamakawa reverses out of by slugging Kanemura in the head and thus hitting the move. It's kinda uneven match because there are a lot of big big bumps early (where Yamakawa goes flying over the toprope into some chairs set up on chairs and Kanemura gets body slammed through a table on the floor) and I think it would have made the Big Transitional Bumps (The Struggle for the Brainbuster off the stage Table bump; the Toprope Facebuster bump) look a lot bigger (thought they were still quite effective in the telling of the story). I noticed in the Honma vs Yamakawa matches that the big bumps all add up to the ending. Here the big bumps at the beginning kill time until the middle section of garbage brawling with Kanemura stabbing Yamakawa's arm and hitting the first big low blow to counter a German- and then Yamakawa hits the GERMAN and it's like a real transition to offense. And that is the beginning of the finish as Yamakawa hits some big moves to get to the stage and hit the Brainbuster through the table WHICH SETS UP Yamakawa being strong enough to pull off the BEAUTIFULLY GNARLY Spinning Facebuster for the pin. There is only two BIG bones of contention with the psychology of the match- Kanemura sells a Table like a dropkick and Yamakawa thinks he's Manabu Nakanishi when being hit with a board before the finish- but past those two glaring flaws, this is a good little match with a cool interpromotional

match-up of two underrated wrestlers who just so happen to be pathetic bump and blade freaks. Not top five death match ever but definately Top Five Death Match of 2000 so far. Plus the intros were WAAAY too much fun and cool- especially with Yamakawa smoking the Team No Respect dance routine with the fucked-up imagery of the white cowboy hat and snake skin pants coupled with the un-deathmatchlike sounds of Journey doing "Seperate Ways". But I finally digress.....

Mike Samples vs. Shadow WX (Extreme Tournament FINAL):

If you watched the BATTLE STATION ON SAMURAI TV! that preceded this episode, you see that Shadow WX did the burning shirt spot in a match prior to becoming Richard Prior-esque- thus making one wonder " Did Shadow WX LOOK at the tape of that match- and if he did- did he say (to himself) did he say 'I AM SHADOW WX AND THERE IS NO WAY THAT I COULD ALMOST SET MYSELF ON FIRE [[[[TWICE!!!!]]]] The curse is lifted, old son. I can do that spot for eternity NOW! LOOK! I almost caught on FIRE! What are the chances of THAT happenening EVER again?!? What? a PLAZILLION to one! I.... AM.... FREE.....I.... WILL..... NEVER..... DIE..... I,,,,,,AM,,,,,,IIIIMMMMMMOOOORRRRTTTTAAALL!!!!!" Then they have this match and he catches on fire for a long long time. I remember it like it was yesterday. I'll make no qualms about the fact that we here at the DVDVR are fearless Garbage Wrestling Vampires of the worst magnitude when it comes to some things and I remember the phone call from Schneider when he got this tape:

PHIL: Hey Dean, Rippa made me the tape. You ready...

DEAN: Oh that Big Japan. I guess they show Shadow WX catching on fire....

PHIL: FUCK YEAH! It's like when Pentagon died in the ring and AAA was showing slow motion replays of it. Christ, Dean, it's BIG JAPAN. what were you expecting? Anyway he's on fire.... riiiiigghht NOW!

DEAN: Okay

PHIL: He's still on fire....

DEAN: Okay.

PHIL: He's still on fire. Some guys are trying to put him out....but they can't.....

DEAN: Oh fuck.....

PHIL: He's still on fire. The crowd is freaking out and the ringside guys are panicking...

DEAN: That ain't good.

PHIL: He's STILL on fire, they can't get him out of the shirt...

DEAN: Oh Jesus!

PHIL: He's STILL on fire.....He's still on fire He's still on fire..... aaaaaannnd.....HE'S OUT!

DEAN: You're taping that for me, right?

PHIL: Rippa is. And the Honma match rules.

DEAN: Cool.

PHIL: The rest of this Match sucks dick in a Mike Samples Sucks Dick kinda way.

I got the tape later and he was right about everything. Mike Samples really sucks.

Tomoaki Honma vs. Abdullah Jr Kobayashi (Big Japan Death Match Title):

I will be the first to say that I was first on the Kobayashi bandwagon, back when he was the anonymous Big Japan Heavyweight guy with the thermos. He seemed to have a grasp of selling and psychology and he had a good mid-grade power arsenal. Plus he is a topflight True Bumpfreak so I figured he be a big cog in the whole Big Japan Renaissance of Death Matches before long- and here it is. there is this whole thing at the beginning where Honma visits Kobayashi's bar-be-cue stand and tries to put his hands in the burning coals or some such. Honma- looking like a refugee from a XL fashion catalog- is sufficiently psyched enough to bring the deathmatch genius now, so they switch to the match. Honma is pissed at the entrance, wearing the fat ass belt that says "I've done... questionable.... things." They stare at the ladder and start off with a Knuckle Lock with both grabbing the ladder and the kinetic energy surging through it creating the extended knucklelock. they then have the BEAUTIFUL scientific Chain-Wrestling Into the Barbed-wire boards and it's FUCKING GREAT- as they cancel each other out and never hit the barbed-wire, but Kobayashi is fucking NELSON ROYALESQUE with his Arm Drag into an Armbar. They then go into Stiff Beatings into the Barbed-wire but cancel each other out so they take it to the floor and the Big Bumps BEGIN! Kobayashi Gets reversed into a ladder that is sitting next to the ringpost so Honma follows it up back CRUSHING Juniors legs by riding the ladder straight onto his shins. OWW-EEE! Honma and Jr fight to the top of the ladder with Honma winning the race and doing the classy Pumphandle Armbreaker over the top rung of the ladder- SETTING UP THE PSYCHOLOGY FOR THE REST OF THE MATCH! WOO-HOO! It's so much more fun to watch the mentally deranged bumps when they are part of a coherent story. honma does a Samoan Drop onto the Barbed-wire and it all goes awry and Kobayashi lands all ONRYO-like on his shoulder and hurty becomes REALLY HURTY- then that goes into the SUPERhurty Barbed-wire board Sammich and it's all painful looking and shit. Honma screws the pooch on a Run-Up-the Turnbuckle-And-Do-A-Moonsault thing on the ladder in the corner, missing the ladder and wrenching his ankle at an impossible angle so Junior starts carving up Honma to allow young Honma TO WHIP OUT THE BLADE. Which he kinda does. So after a few wacky ladder spots that looked better on paper, Junior becomes Honma's facilitator by posting him twice- which is a sign to Honma TO SHOW THE WORLD HIS HIDEOUS FRONTAL LOBES! After that Honma takes a Flair Launch off the ladder for two and then Junior hits a SWANK Pile Driver for two and then goes into an Abdominal Stretch to keep it Old School as a motherfucker. Honma counters out and hits some Rolling Elbows to set up a whole Elbow vs Lariat section which is pretty nice as Honma overrotates on a Released German to hit a big Elbow. Honma then starts randomly hitting Junior in the arm with chairs and sets up Junior for the Toprope Hurricanrana through the barbed-wire board on two chairs on the floor. Junior reverses it into a Rydeen Bomb for the Super Nasty bump of the match and he drags him into ring to get a two count. It also shows Honma's back becoming so much uncooked Hamburger. Junior hits a SWANK Northern Lights Bomb for two. He hits a topladder elbow for two. they then do this elaborate sequence where Honma hits a couple Viagra Drivers to set up Honma crushing his face with a in-rope Ladder Teeter-Totter spot to set up Honma hitting a top-of-the-ladder Diving Headbutt onto Juniors Arm which he takes straight into a Key Lock that Junior reverses out of but which puts Honma in perfect position to procure a Fujiwara Armbar for the win. This was a good enough match but not a great match. I think they actually have a great match in them but it won't be a ladder match. Junior is geared for a great actual wrestling match and this was a bunch of ladder spots getting in the way of a great wrestling

match. They hinted at a true Power move Ass-stomp but the need to have a ladder match got in the way. Plus they blew some spots, a lot of ladder spots look contrived and a lot of ladder spots look crappy. The coolest parts were the brawling and wrestling parts and the Barbed wire parts. Ladder+These Two=BAD.

Abdullah the Butcher curses at Junior and beats him into oblivion after the dust settles.

You want this proly.

~!~

%^%^%^%^%^ Insane Championship Wrestling - "Sunday Bloody Sunday" - 8/11/96 Detroit, MI

(PHIL RIPPA!)

I have been slacking on my US Indy Boy duties so I was going to do some APW this week but then Marcel delivered the goods with this little sleazy tape so I HAD to review this. 1996 - a time when it seemed every US Indy federation was trying to copy the ECW blueprint. What blueprint is that? Brawling, table breaking and over-booked matches. Plus when Ian Rotten is on your card, you know things are going to get bloody and sleazy.

Brian Fury vs. Breyer Wellington vs. Pierre Francois:

Fury spent all his money getting a mask from Highspots so his ring attire is a sweatshirt and jeans. Wellington looks like the pimple-faced kid from the Simpsons come to life. Francois is a Louie Spicoli doppelganger who, surprisingly, is the most talented worker of three. This immediately means that he will be the one who gets eliminated first. Francois does a nice Northern Lights suplex which was Horowitz like. It also looks like our friend Francois has been watching some tapes as he does a Tiger Driver and a nasty belly to back suplex which Fury sells like a hip toss. None of these guys are overly experience in the ring with Francois seeming to have the firmest grasp on the actual concept of "wrestling match". Thus, when Francois leaves, Fury and Wellington become completely lost. "Umm, I think I am supposed to punch you now. "No, let me do this tumbling routine that I know." They bumble along for far too long before the anticlimatic Fury victory.

"Bloody" Bill Skullion vs. Blue Scorpion:

The parade of homemade masks continues. Skullion not only is doing the Sandman gimmick but he is living the lifestyle too as he staggers around the ring, drooling over himself and making desperate attempts to keep his pants up. Quick squash that has Skullion winning with a powerbomb that made Kevin Nash and Sid proud. Skullion exposes the business some more with three more *cough* powerbombs *cough*. I think this was the second match on the card because Scorpion had to get to his shift at the local Denny's.

Pierre Francois vs. Rhino Richards:

Yes, that is the same Rhino who is ECW today. This was back when he wasn't cutting ahead of Dreamer and Raven at the buffet table. Francois is back because someone no showed. Must

have been an Indy veteran or Axl Rotten. Not a match as Rhino lays out Francois with a chair shot before he gets in the ring. Disappointing because I think this could have been a fun little affair.

"Sweet Daddy" Malcolm Monroe vs. Alexis Machine:

Close your eyes and picture what the offspring of a Koko B. Ware/Buzz Sawyer union would look like. Gotta it? That is what Monroe looks like. Not to be out done, Monroe's second, The Bug, is a cross between Mr. Pogo and Headhunter A. God awful match as Monroe has the workrate of about zero Kelvin. Actual match last about 90 seconds with Monroe getting the win. Cue the overbooking. Tex Monroe, Rick Matrix and Bill Skullion all make cameo appearances. Skullion delivers the worst chair shot in the history of chair shots. More sports entertainment breaks out as Monroe is supposed to get five minutes with Alexis Machine's manager, The Producer (who also is the owner of ICW. God forbid there be a indy federation without the evil owner.) The Producer runs to the back so Monroe holds a big Onita session as the Producer gets dragged back to the ring. If you press the fast forward button hard enough, you might be able to create a worm hole allowing you to jump back in time and decide not to watch this match.

Havoc Inc. vs. Midnight Riders :

GOD DAMN! Havoc Inc. is good and I want to know where they are wrestling now. Hollywood and No Dog are the Gangsters with wrestling moves. And lots of them. The match is a 10 minute beat down of the Riders. Many tables get shattered but most of them come courtesy of tope con hilos (or at least attempts at tope con hilos). Havoc Inc. does all sorts of weird shit. Hollywood does a powerbomb out of a reverse Gory special which was off the hook. No Dog does lots of jumpy moonsaults and leg lariats. He also does a somersault legdrop to the floor which was neat. Their finisher is the jump off of guys back (ala the Hardys) into a hurricanrana. Close to 206 tables get obliterated during the match as Johnny Psycho and Battlestar (who must be the second coming of Rocky King) take their beatings like men. This is also the part of the show where the ring announcer, while trying to get the crowd back, starts to utter this oft to be repeated phrase - "Please, get out of the way." It might as well been "Run. Run for you life." As the rest of the show ends up no where near the ring.

Bruiser Bedlam vs. Ian Rotten:

Bedlam was supposed to face New Jack but he was injured so ECW sent over Ian Rotten. I am starting the timer on how long it will be before Ian blades. Bell rings. 14 seconds later, Ian is feeling the sweet touch of razor to forehead. Golly, Ian does a blade job that is even horrific for his standards. Hey look at that, Bruiser Bedlam just took a swing at Marcel. Bedlam gets a little bit of COLOR as he blades on camera but he takes no bumps which is really annoying. Rotten takes a shot with the barbwired baseball bat but the big spot is where Rotten gets backdropped onto thumbtacks and Bedlam then jabs the thumbtacks, one by one, into Rotten's head. Well, that is just plan rude. Hey Marcel lives up to the DVDVR Playboy legacy as he runs like a little girl when the fellas come flying back through his section. Preservationism at its finest. Bedlam wins. This was all sorts of goofy fun that would not be counted as wrestling.

This takes place in the parking lot. Not a match but a standard fight with lots of dragging the guy by the hair spots. One thing to notice is the conveniently placed Escort. The wander around, up to the roof and back down using various bits of plunder along the way. Finally, Monroe ends up with a flaming branding iron. I will now give you all a moment to try and figure out where this is going

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Man, this was all sorts of weird and entertaining. There are a couple guys on this card that I would like to see in an actual wrestling match. Supposedly, Christian Cage wrestled in this fed because the announcers drop his name a lot. Might have to check some more of this stuff out.

(PHIL SCHNEIDER)

This was the ubiquitous Indy sleaze, prop match for a run-in. As these two non-descript shmoe do some half assed wrestling for a couple of minutes, setting up the listless BEAT DOWN~! By Zandig and Hardcore Nick Gage. They then go on to SHOOT~! on Christian York and Joey Matthews (I think. The sound was the shits). Jeez, how fucking bush league is it to do a shoot interview on Joey Matthews and freaking Christian York, why not tell us how big a prick Gillberg

is back stage, or tell us the real truth about which Corporal Punishment is the real Corporal Punishment. Zandig and Hardcore Steve blather on for a bit setting up the big main event tag.

Softcore Nick Burke vs. Johnny Cashmere:

Softcore is doing a gimmick where he refuses to wrestle CZW STYLE instead insisting to actually wrestle a match. He is almost a parody of a typical New Jerseyite, he is almost drawn in too broad strokes, fat guy, big nose, 2 day beard growth, grating accent. They do a decent job of feigning wrestling for a minute, until Johnny's brother does a run-in (Vince Russo doesn't write wrestling) costing Softcore the win. Then Johnny and his brother do some lame ass stereotypical Italian mike work insulting the crowd (of course it doesn't make any sense to attempt to get over as heels by costing another, more hated heel a match, but hey who am I to criticize the guy who made RAW.)

Middknight vs. John Dahmer:

I think these guys are tag partners or something, they both have that Comic book fan look. With Middknight having the full on porno store clerk perm. Wash, rinse, repeat as they do some stuff before a run in of some sort. Dahmer throws the worst strikes of the night, which is saying something, cause for the most part all these guys punch like pussies.

Trent Acid vs. Wifebeater:

Trent Acid is one of the Backseat Boys and looked pretty good in this year's Super 8. Wifebeater looks and wrestles like a crappier Sean Stasiak, the Wifebeater was not wearing a wifebeater, which is just inexplicable to me. Wifebeater uses this pretty ass power offense, and Trent Acid tries some half assed lucha, and they don't click at all. They stumble along with the match (which includes Acid pulling down his pants and doing a moonsault, which I am sure gave all the latent homosexuals in the crowd a little thrill, however I am sure they justified their erection with the presence of one of the many skank valets.) There is another run-in and some other stuff happens.

White Lotus vs. Justice Pain:

This was a 2 out of 3 falls match, and while Pain seemed decent in the young-stupid-guy who kills himself way, there was no way he was ready for a match this long. White Lotus seems pretty useless, as he didn't even take a bunch of ill advised bumps. Bunches of not good stuff, including some really loose brawling and some ass crappy parking lot stuff. The end comes when some fat guy (probably the owner of a sub place who gives the BOYS~! Free ham and cheese) throws powder and Justice keeps his title. Justice does die some, including a new Jackish balcony legdrop, but it isn't enough to save this matches bacon.

Ric Blade/Lobo vs. Hardcore Nick Gage/Zandig:

This was the big main event, and was the best match on the show, although it would be a stretch to call it good. Zandig is the owner of CZW (and former Ultimate Warrior knock off) and he does jack and shit in this match. Ric Blade is the young crazy highspot boy, and he does a Space Flying Tiger Drop (which was more Ikeda then Sasuke, but an A for effort) and a balcony moonsault. Hardcore Stevie seemed like the best actual worker on the show, as he was the only

guy that put any mustard on his strikes and he did break out a sort of choice locomotion piledriver. The faces also had a generic ring rat who did ranas and planchas and shit. The meat of the match was just a set up for the big spot, as the heels stacked 8 tables on top of each other, putting Lobo on top, they then set the bottom tables on fire and Justice Pain (I think, it might have been Ric Blade turning on his partner, all these guys kind of look alike and the lighting wasn't very good) dumps a bunch of thumbtacks on the pile, and leaps through a hole in the roof 15 feet or so down on the whole mess. The spot was definitely insane (although not as insane as starting a huge fire in the middle of an overcrowded, tiny armory) although it completely ground the match to a halt, and thus kind of hurt the match itself. If you want to see the spot, download the JPEG don't bother getting the tape as the rest of the show blows ass.

BJ brought over four guys, for the big 6-man they brought over Wifebeater (who is Sub-Benkei), Justice Pain (who is slightly worse than Shadow WX) and Hardcore Nick Blade (who may be better than Mitegi, although not by much). They then brought over Wifebeater (worse than Crazy Sheik) and Zandig (may be as bad as Kojika) for the Extreme Cup. If they kept the feud to Blade and Pain it might actually be decent, but Beater and Zandig suck balls, and shouldn't be put over Ted BlackBear much less fucking Tomokai Honma.

~!~

(//*/*/*/*/* (EWF 2/27/2000-HH-somewhere in Japan
(DEAN RASMUSSEN)

Young hard-charger in the cutthroat world of Pro Wrestling Trading- Scott Mailman- sent me this and BOY! is it INDIE with a capital INDIE. At first I thought that it was one of those Japanese things where they call it the same thing as the lame US version but actually do it a lot better- like when you hear about a triangle match in Japan, it isn't like the shitty triangle matches you get in the US, it means that three guys wrestle each other in three matches in one night. I heard this was a Battle Royale but then I noticed that there are like fifteen little matches trotted out so I figured it is somekind of whirlwind tournament that they are calling a Battle Royale- well NO NO NO! There is a Royale Rumble like BattleRoyale and it is a MURDERER'S ROW of Japanese indie heroes and pathetic indie shmoe. IT'S FUN! Please enjoy my slightly different NOTEZ! (Here, Here, Here, Here and Here.) Let's continue...

The first match is the DDT Dancing heel stable balding manager- sounds like.....
SAAANNDGGAR!.. vs Exciting Yoshida's, Sasaki's and Takagi's Valet who is phonetically called something like DOLLY SUKOOOOO over the PA. This is horrendous and thankfully overbooked to move things right along. IT INVOLVES A TAZER! SWEET JESUS NOOOO! Saandgar gets his head shaved to save his shower drain from clogging next week, I'm a-guessing.....

Sanshiro Takagi vs Masao Orihara:

This is Orihara's Best Hairday EVER! I figured out about five matches in that all of these preliminary matches are five minutes long- I guess to decide the order of entrance or sumthin. Either way, these aren't very good. No. Not at all. But they are DRIPPING with buckets of

indie-sleaze. Takagi will fly through some chairs for you. I think Orihara loses by referees decision so Orihara gets on the STICK! and sounds as cool in a Pierrothesque way!

OSAMU~! Tachihikari vs Edddddoooo Sappermarsasapper (or whatever.):

Osamu~! is all fit n' trim, rerady to throw another fight at Pride. His pants are fabulous as they accentuate his lumbering. Osamu~! has hit his stride and we have it on tape! His opponent is an American named Ed. He's very doughy and a superShooter who is really threatening in a Senior Real Estate Sales Reprersentative sort of way. This match RULES becaue Osamu~! wins with a CROSSFACE OF TRUE PUDGE! Ed takes the next flight back to Columbus, Ohio to tend to his car dealership- his shoot dreams dashed by the monster called Tachihikari. ROCK ON!

SURVIVAL MOTHERFUCKING TOBITA vs. KEN THE MOTHERFUCKING BOX!!:

Ken is all peppy in this. The crappy PA distorts Survival's Bad Ass theme. Ken is over as a motherfucker with the EWF rubes. Ken is psyched to make Survival his bitch once again and they take it to the floor, because RINGS ARE FOR PUSSIES! Ken beats the living hell out of Survival AGAIN! so Tobita blades like a freak as Swinging Branch Punch crush his puny human skull! Post-match, a destroyed and demoralized Survival makes a speech to the total enchantment of the Survivophiles in attendance.

Nise Onita vs. sounds like FILO CROOPIE!!!:

The only good thing about any match with Nise Onita is that Nise Onita has the AWEESSOME Nise Wild Thing Entrance music. It sounds like Ed Bradley at a Karaoke night gone horribly wrong. Filo looks the Nise Singer For Warrant- but going one step further with the Jennifer Beals FLASHDANCE sleeveless/neckless sweatshirt and Mauve/Magenta stretchpants that strike fear in every man's heart. Nise Onita gets the mount and you no longer want to live.

Survival Tobita vs. TOBA!:

This is the most obscure dream match in the world. Okay, maybe not. Toba is DDT boxing glove boy and he's all fun and stuff. Tobita is still bleeding from the King-sized Ass-kicking that Ken~! laid on his sorry human ass. Toba is concerned about not being able to get the pint of blood of his fancy fancy gloves. Survival hits a Benkei level offensive flurry at one point but is bludgeoned by the scrawny DDT bastard. Toba by REF'Z DECISION!

Nise Onita vs. TOBA!:

Nise uses a chair to fend of the boxing gloves. Oh yeah this was as horrendous as it sounds. Nise wins by Ref's Decizion and the shittiest wrestling match EVER comes to an end- going the distance at five minutes- in Listening To Your Boss Try To Tell Jokes increments of time..

Kyoko Inoue/ Tanny Mouse vs. Saya Endo/ Tamura:

WHA.....? Kodo Fuyuki's hot monkey love has been bringing the extra pounds to the love struck Kyoko- as their long luxurious Sunday brunches of Mimosas, pancakes and strawberries and endless beautiful romance of walking in the rain and watching Mad About You has totally ruined

Kyoko's workout regiment. This was the most actual wrestling you'll see on this tape. There you go. HEY! Look! It's Tanny Mouse! She's still developing I guess. She's not very good.

OSAMU~! Tachihikari vs. Nise Onita:

Three Nise Onita matches? What kind of sin must a commit to deserve such a..... Osamu is as you like: bare-foot and in the mount. He hits a rear naked choke on the suck ass Nise Onita at the minute mark! OSAMU~!

Thus ends the tournament of SOMETHING. I didn't effect the number of entrance and... shit I dunno.. either way, using the Commodore 65 VideoGrasper 4000, I created some video still FILES in JPEG form.

THE BATTLE ROYALE:

The style is like a Royal Rumble. To enter, you have to show a picture of yourself on one of the black and white pages in the very back of the 2000 Gong Mook and you have to be within two pages of any Goro Surumi picture. Battle Royales are listless, useless matches that never watchable. This one is different in that- while it DOES thoroughly blow goats- at least you get to try to name all the indie Sleaze All-Stars! Thus, I like this more than any Battle Royale ever.

Still, I'm gonna basically name the entrants in order and comment:

#1-Sanshiro Takagi and #2 Naoshi Sano stand around and do a little wrestling.

#3- is the dancing DDT guy and he and Takagi do a SPECTACULAR rendition of the most incredibly fruity dance in ALLLLLLL of Japan. Takagi quickly eliminates both one second after the music ends.

#4- Phantom Funakoshi comes in and he and Takagi have a bunch of wrestling.

#5- SPWF Superstar Masasistu Takamoto comes in and I wanna see him in like a real match from what I saw on this.

#6- I dunno. Leatherface gets in touch with his feminine side and acts out his Tommy Tune aspirations. Grace is hot. Oh yeah!

#7- Delfincito? I should know who this is but I don't. So there.

#8- Tsubo Genjin- the newest most worthless wrestler in Japan enters the fray. He comes out to a Journey-esque song and the standing a punching section of the Battle Royal begins.

#9- FROM SATAIMA PRO! It's crappiest monster- Astero Kendo! I have a feeling that Naoshi Sano is all of these monsters in the Battle Royale, but that's just a hunch.

#10- Survival Tobita enters in with a mat to reinforce the "Rings Are For Pussies" motif of the night and he eliminates Astero Kendo like a Vince Russo eliminates viewers.

#11- Masato Orihara is attacked by archenemy Takagi outside the ring! Phantom and Orihara double team Takagi. I missed some key storyline since my last batch of DDT.

#12- EXCITING YOSHIDA! He hits a nice elbow drop.

#13- Some masked guy. I dunno.

#14- I'm thinking this is Warabunta from that IWA card. He's got a Hayabusa get up with a big nose.

#15- KISHIN KAWABATA! HAHAAHAHAHAHA! I kid! I have no fucking idea who this is!

#16- ONRYO! Woo-HOO! Noone is being eliminated and everyone is standing around. Onryo is quite the man who would also stand around.

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This is HBK's final match (at least until he comes out of retirement again) and was for his Texas Wrestling Alliance promotion. Venom is veteran Paul Diamond (of Badd Company fame) playing the most Canadian Raven ever (complete with goofy inter nose, nose ring, and long hair) and has control of the TWA through machinations. Shawn Michaels is putting his TWA title (which he got handed to him by Michaels fanboy Justin Credible) against the promotion, and in a more meta sense, is putting his body on the line in an attempt to jump start his promotion. This match was super garbagey, with Venom taking most of the bumps (including a swank suplex off a stage through a pair of tables) but Michaels did get slammed into the guardrail and delivered a fist off a ladder. Unlike most of the TWA guys who are as green as Perry Saturn's urine, Paul Diamond is a good worker and carries the match well, as Shawn is obviously zonked out on painkillers. The end comes as Shawn is handcuffed and bleeding as Venom canes him, Shooter Shultz (sort of crappy psuedo TAZZZZZ WWF Developmental guy) runs in to save

Shawn, and in a comical moment, fails in repeated attempts to t-bone Venom through a table, he finally unlocks Shawn who powerslams Venom through the table, hits the superkick and goes over. Decent match, mostly do to Venom as Shawn is basically a shell, still he got a nice triumphant babyface send off, and hopefully will raise his kid. Probably not though.

Chris Benoit vs. Kevin Sullivan - Retirement Match - Bash at the Beach '97- (RIPPA)

I had two reasons for wanting to see this match when I was deciding whether I should buy this show or not. 1) They had the enjoyable brawl in Baltimore and I figured that they would have a similar little affair here. 2) This was going to be Sullivan's last match and I figured that Sullivan would want to go out in a blaze of glory. Maybe take a big bump or at least carve himself open as sort of a homage to his entire career. Boy, I was disappointed on so many levels. Sullivan really was never overly spectacular and his later years certainly were not necessarily easy on the eyes. He always plodded along and his selling left a lot to be desired. Of course, he worked stiff in this match because it was his last chance to legit beat on Benoit. The actual success of the match thus rested on Benoit ability to carry three people. Three because Sullivan, Jacquelyn and Jimmy Hart attacked Benoit in waves with Jackie and Hart taking turns on who could expose the business more. The immediate "there is heat between Sullivan and Jacquelyn" card is played so you know how this is going to end. Jimmy Hart takes the biggest bump of the match as he gets pushed off a lifeguard stand into some Palmetto trees. One of the major flaws of the match is the mid-match attempt to make Sullivan the face by having him fight out of two Crippler Crossfaces (the move that had beaten all of Sullivan's cronies to allow Benoit this match). I guess Sullivan booked his own match. The idea fails miserably because the crowd is apathetic towards Sullivan and either wants to see him lose or get his head slammed in the toilet. Since they ain't anywhere near the ladies room, they want Benoit to go over. So here you have the obvious heel (a man who was still the heel even when Cactus Jack turned on him) doing the big Hulk up to no reaction. Then Jacquelyn turns on him and a wooden chair shot costs him the match. So in someone's mind, one Chair Shot > two Crippler Crossfaces. Added in to the utter nonsense is the fact that Jimmy Hart fights with Jacquelyn after she turns on Sullivan but then Hart turns on Sullivan for losing the match. So in essence Jacquelyn does one turn, Sullivan does one and Hart does two. I understand the idea of trying for the "he's retired now" sympathy pop but the crowd was so far gone that it came off horribly. This was a scenario where everyone knew Sullivan was losing; they just came to see how they would get to that point. That would be through the sewage line known as WCW.

Cactus Jack vs. Triple H - Hell in a Cell - No Way Out 2000-(RIPPA):

The match that should have been Mick Foley's last match. I really liked the fact that going into the match, I had no idea what the outcome was going to be. It was quite easy to justify both ends of the spectrum. Giving him the title would have been nice thank you for your faithful service and they could have easily hyped the Wrestlemania as his final match. Or have him lose cleanly (the way Foley has always insisted he would do it) and go out with a nice memorable match. In reality, neither of these things happened but I promise that I am going to look at this match like I didn't know what happened at Wrestlemania. This was also the match that completely sold me on Triple H (granted I haven't seen the street fight from Royal Rumble yet. That will be sometime this week.) I had been slowly turning around on Hunter's work but this was the match that cemented the deal. I can even pinpoint the exact moment that Triple H won

we over - more on that in a moment. Foley takes his share of nasty bumps in the match but you can easily see why it was time for him to retire. He clearly had slowed down in the ring as many of his movements seemed almost labored. Foley had begun to rely heavily on punches and nothing else. Most of the early bumps consist of Foley having the back of his head slammed into the cage. I dug the fact that the brawl around the ring a bit and then got in the ring did some wrestling, including a battle of DDTs. Triple H also busted out the drop toe hold into the chair spot which can be viewed as him watching Raven vs. Benoit tapes. Helmsley takes a nice Jerry bump to the floor and has his face raked across the cage but the moment that wins me over is when he gets slingshotted into the cage. Because the distance between the cage and him was about three centimeters, Hunter has no time to fully protect himself going into the cage. The force which he hit the cage had me turning to Schneider and saying "Got no problems with Triple H anymore." Helmsley also blades after the spot and he shows he was chewing his aspirin. A nasty, deep cut pumps the rest of the match. It was almost as if it was his own little tribute to Jack, a "As thanks for the great matches, you don't have to do all the work in this match". Helmsley continues to gain my admiration by going all old school by twitching like a madman after taking the super chair assisted hip buster. The breaking out of the cage scenario was neat but Foley stupidly runs out of the cage and RIPS his arm open as the cage swings back on him. The opened cage actually turned out to be the biggest hazard of the match as it would wildly swing back and forth and was very indiscriminate in its destruction. The unbreakable US announce table provides another cringe inducing moment as it no-sells a piledriver. It is also around this point that the match breaks down a bit as there is a lot of cage climbing, embarrassing chair throwing and breaks in the action. The redoing of every spot from the Mankind vs. Undertaker match was a little annoying as Foley took a fairly unnecessary bump through the Spanish announce table. I don't think anyone would have complained if Foley had just climbed to the top and then had done the fall through the cage. (Sadly, I think the match would have been panned by many if he DIDN'T take the bump through the cage.) Of course, Mick probably agreed to all of this before so he could give the fans a show. Triple H still took a few more nasty looking bumps himself. The snap suplex on the top of the cage brought him down right on the cross beams in a move that could not have been good for the kidneys. Plus, if the corner of the cage had given away anymore and we would have had a real nasty incident on our hands. The big tease of the night was the flaming barb wire board. It didn't really come into play. It was kinda like having the window close back up right when the nice lady was about to drop the last remaining undergarment - not that I would know anything about that. If you pay attention, you will catch a production mistake as the camera pans back too soon on the bump through the cage which immediately let the viewers at home know that some was going to die. Helmsley played off the spot well as he was immensely tentative in following up on Foley's fall. Playing off the last match's history, Helmsley knew that Foley might get up since he kept getting up in the last match and during the earlier parts of this match. The other good thing was that Foley was hit with the Pedigree and then pinned. It made a lot more sense than having him make another Superman comeback. Just being able to stand was enough to play up the fact that he was something special. Despite noticing a lot more flaws in the match since the first time I watched it, I still really enjoy this match. It would have been a perfectly acceptable final match. Oops, I promised I wouldn't comment anymore on that.

NEXT WEEK: NAIMARK! The Ballyhooed CMLL PPV! Another angle-riffic GAEA! Another Super Funtastic FABULOUS COVER! STUFF AND THINGS! WOO-HOO!

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So say you hurting
you almost lost your mind
the man you love he hurt you all the time
when things go wrong
go wrong with you
it hurts me too
- ELMORE JAMES